War Diary VII - Atonement

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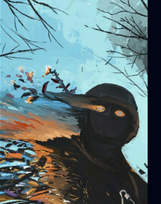

"God's not giving me up.

so I'm just fine.

It's just a matter of time,

though I don't feel my sadness"

I'm Still Fine by The Red Clay Strays.

Atonement – The act of making amends for a wrongdoing. We use this in Ukraine to refer to paying for "**sins**," which in turn refers to tactical mistakes.

Sofia Ivanna, I'm currently recovering in the hospital. This period, I'm probably take me a few days to write because of the bad TBI I got but I will persevere. My wounds have left me bed ridden so neither of my legs are able to carry weight. My right leg has a fits by 2in hole & the bones were completely shattered. It's pulled out unrecognizable. The second wound has been much worse, having probably 3 dozen PTSs detonate within 5m of me. My memory is sporty & thoughts cloudy. I've also been suffering from bad panic attacks & flashbacks. I will carry on regardless, as always.

Anyway, so in the minutes from the 1st, I left off on a hard lesson the beginning. We had to go through an anti-tank ditch consisting of 2 trenches & 8 rows of concertina wire. This took about 45 minutes & was done in the open. Fortunately, the weather was shit so drones couldn't really fly & lacked stability. All in all, it went surprisingly smoothly (relatively speaking) they had shit again though. We were the second echelon to do this, I think the first team got spotted because there was a traitor drone sitting directly in our path near the entrance point. Thankfully, the operator wasn't paying attention & we managed to shoot it before it caught us.

The rest of the infil was uneventful, stepped around a couple mines but otherwise pretty smooth. The position we were meant to occupy was very suboptimal so we decided to crash 6 niggers into an a man fighting position for a week or so. Our original mission entailed to capture a trench where a dozen mobsaks got killed a few days prior, mostly by drones. Russians likely took the opportunity to occupy some positions in the trenches with 3-5 people. We assumed that the conscripts pretty much got themselves killed by being lazy/stupid/not in retrospect this was an obvious ambush. Fucking idiots.

Our mission got aborted because Russian infiltration groups started pushing deeper into the grey zone to occupy positions. We decided to cut our losses on that timeline & try to clear out the area instead.

Our first task was hunting down a lone Russian that managed to evade our drones. We were looking for blood but it turns out he was completely naked, as in no armor, weapons, nothing. Just the clothes on his back. He was shell shocked to hell for the same fuck & wasn't very lucid. We sent him back.

Our drone company completely dropped the ball for resupply this mission, virtually none of the food & water they dropped survived the landing. Eventually the Brigade support battalion took over resupply & things went pretty smooth after that. A friend of our company in the FPV teams flew an FPV with Kalashnikov & cigarettes into our position, which was pretty funny & much appreciated.

The next bad comes during a position reconnaissance mission in the village we were staged near, just a matter of checking out the position & it's viability. Everything went fine until our scale back. We saw a bicycle drone appear & start watching us. After a minute or so, 122mm rounds started impacting around us. Dropped two PSs, heard shrapnel & smoke engulfing us. Fortunately, we weren't terribly far from a wooded area that provided decent cover. As we entered the treeline, FPVs started appearing & hunting us. We knew we shook the bicycle because the FPVs didn't know our exact location. Lots of panicked around and scattered bullets were shooted to the air, but there was a serious spark in the treeline. When the bicycle observing us was charged out, they sent an FPV to cover the changeover so we couldn't take advantage of it.

One of the FPVs did see us. It was a fiber optic drone with a nasty payload. As it looked for a hole in the canopy to fly in, we started shooting. This motherfucker used a tree as cover, meaning bullets2 so we couldn't shoot it as it approached. Never thought I'd see a drone operator smart enough to use cover. When it popped back out I managed to clip the fiber optic cable. It crashed into the ground & we started moving out of the area. Unfortunately, part of the cable was alive. This was still a problem because generally have the other drones, you have to keep the throttle going manually. If they lose connection they typically just drop straight down. Maybe there was an input glitch, but I also haven't seen a drone of this type before so maybe it was different software.

We managed to shake our pursuers, the treeline we were in before was getting soaked with artry & more FOVs but we were already a good 500m away. Once the Slavic did another changeover with the controlling FP in the wrong direction, we managed to shake the drone. Fucking idiots. Unfortunately, the course lived a total of 34 125min drills & 2 FPVs trying to get us. The intelligence of the drone operator was disturbing, it definitely wasn't the organic brain out of the local Russian mobsaks brigades we fought on the ground. This is later incidents lead me to believe an elite drone unit, likely Rubicon, were operating in the AO.

The next week or so was fairly uneventful, we were sent to clear a few areas but didn't end up fighting anyone. We used a satchel charge to destroy a position, which was hard as hell because dropped his a vest, so my pick caused a fucking unimaginable amount of bleeding. This was the picture I shared with blood on my pants in notes.

Eventually, we got the order to clear the village. It was a simple task, only about 20 buildings & handful of bunkers to clear & assess viability for occupation. We were told there's no evidence of Russians in the town but maybe some Ukrainians with poor communication, so hold for unless you get engaged or have POs. So we cleared the house on the northern end of the street, we came across two dudes set up inside trying to get a radio. Unfortunately, we couldn't speak Russian & they couldn't speak English, so I assume we be was Ukrainian. We ordered it up & crossed the street. Not 3 minutes later we got a call that command intercepted a radio transmission of Russians asking for resupply in the northern section of the town. We immediately turned around & assaulted the house & took both of the Russian prisoner. It was too late, the shells started landing all around us. The Russian commander decided it was time to withdraw & we started our exfil.

With the prisoners in tow, we started heading back towards our position. Unfortunately, we were moving much slower because of the detention of the brutlist, meaning we were running towards the enemy drones. About half way through the village I looked up & saw 3 FPVs circling in the air like vultures. We managed to find a basement, the only hard cover we could find at all. We all ran in as we saw a little trained dog into the wall. I said LA it's gets down there because the basement was not adequate at all. They weren't prior military & I wanted them to be safe if nothing else. They yelled that there was space for all of us in the tunnel & I started to get up.

It was too late, an FPV flew down the stairwell & exploded. The shrapnel tore through the Russian & the dog. I ended up with a few 4.5mm shrapnel injuries. About a minute later, another FPV detonated in the stairwell. I couldn't move or see all, I couldn't see through the dust, I was so dazed. I just remember screaming that we had wounded. Afterd, the Russian prisoner who spoke English grabbed me & dragged me to the "safe" corner of the bunker, against the staircase but opposite of the bottom. He helped bandage my leg & tourniquet. The other Russian, Volvo, also tried pulling in M.

G.A.T tried to come treat me but I told them to get comms first, which took a few minutes. Eventually, they got a radio transmission through to the Brigade. We made it to the Brigade point by sunset. Unfortunately, we couldn't get out of there cooked & got shot but maintained connection. The operator kept covering the nurses for probably 5 minutes straight. I blamed it. Every time I heard that whining of an FPV going for the kill I just closed my eyes & covered my face, along with a cigarette. After a few minutes they dragged me back inside & threw me in an MRAP. A Lilac was in the back, he put his leg on my cheek & held my hand to stop me from bouncing & falling out the truck. He kept trying to keep my conscious because I was drifting in & out.

We made it to the Brigade hospital. They wanted to keep me in a fellow medic come through the door but they did well at keeping me alive & calm. They need a magnet to remove most of the shrapnel in my leg which is just a metal fence on my worse leg to immobilize it. I remember one of them was wearing a MILFOH shirt, which was somewhat comforting. I bounced around between cool units until I made it to Kyiv. I'm stable & nutraged to eat & drink for the first time in 5 days. A few friends that are still recovering from previous wounds have popped in to visit & make sure I'm alright. Apparently they were all also freaking out about the whole situation. My friends dropped off new clothes, documents, etc. The Brigade medical service gave me a temporary phone so we until I get mine back, which is actually what I'm writing this on.

My team recently exfiled without much more trouble, which has ended my service a tree. They're organizing a trip to come visit. It put down a memorial plaque for M in Mariian Square. I'm leaving at a few months of recovery until I can go back on mission, so I'll probably focus on hobbies for a while. This part is pretty bad but my mental wounds are worse. I'm having awful flashbacks & panic attacks. I'll likely put pen to Vanna soon because the current antipsychotics aren't working. Once I was fully conscious I listened to the radio & I heard Bakhmut, Soledar, Vuhledar, Ugledar, Avdiivka, Marinka, Donetsk & Mariupol. I'm so sorry, I couldn't hold the line. Each Russian & Western forces are helping too. My cellphone is still with my team leader, once I get it I'll post some pictures. I think I have at least one of my dad giving out after Pokrovsk.

I haven't called my family yet, but probably will soon. I'm not really sure what to say to them. I did call my old squad leader from the 1st Corps, which was comforting. It's hard to write down how I felt right now, no usual I will use music to convey this. During the event, Eyes of the Insane by Slayer. Now, in the hospital on the mend, you'll be sad at this by comfortingly.

I'm not sure what else to say. I'm still going back into Ivoy once I'm able. I may take a break from drone flying on occasion, & maybe get back while I'm already out of action. Otherwise, I'm doing it day by day until I can go back out with my team. I will arrange my fallen homies. My kit was mostly destroyed so I guess I'll be trying out some new pieces. If anyone has a recommendation for a new belt similar to the USMC standard issue one, please let me know.

The fact that I'm alive & in one piece is nothing short of a miracle, made possible only by the unbelievable bravery of my brothers in arms. It feels so weird knowing there's people out there that will risk their lives for us, even for the chance to help you. Not hypothetically, but literally sent it happen.

I feel bad about Alfred & Volvo. They got sent on a much more mission to occupy a position without support. When they came across us, their commander decided to just kill them as well. I never would've expected a Russian to drop me out of a kill zone, but we became blood brothers in that tunnel. I hope they're treated well in captivity. I expect they will become defectors.

During an examination, a doctor asked me why I was here. I was still dazed & just said "I'm a soldier." He asked me what I was in Ukraine, & I gave home the same answer. Slava's mom, bread, prosecution fuck, soldier's fight. The day I left, I told my mom I'm going to Kyiv to fight. I'm not sure if she took it as a panic attack, which had to say being stabed by a crazy man. I lived out the next day that the target was just a random apartment holding 6-8 of the casualties were regular civilians. This put me into an awful mood but was a harsh reminder of why I'm here.

To M, I'm sorry. I'm sorry I decided to keep F & G safe while we lifting soldier's injured in the hilltone. I'm sorry I couldn't come to help you, I'm sorry I didn't ignore the doubts & just kill those guys on sight. If I could trade places with you, I would. I'm sorry I couldn't carry your dead without fear, like a good soldiers. I'm bitter and I'm bitter that the KoF proud, you made the Brigade proud. I'll see you in Valhalla, brother.

"All that shimmers in this world is sure to fade away"

I'm sorry if this was disjointed or poorly written, I'm still under a few meds & the shell shock is cooking down. I wrote this all in one go because I couldn't sleep last night & needed to do something about my thoughts. Writing this all down was somewhat cathartic & helped me make sense of the whole ordeal. I don't know how I'll feel about this in the morning, I'll probably have a couple months but I may try to write more angles similar to the meantime.

A few people asked to support me, which I will not accept. The Brigade is taking good care of me & as my local volunteer groups, they always drop off snacks & such. I'm also getting hospital pay now, which is little higher than combat pay so I won't be doing much. I do appreciate the gesture, however.

I'll be back at it again as soon as I can walk. This experience has been crazy & I feel like I can finally confidently count myself as a combat veteran. Out the random grunts that pulled a few patrols in Afghan, but like those old timers who remember all of my fellow grunts from Bravo or Star City, I can't wait to tell my sisters & nephews these stories. & hopefully my own kids in the future. & kids who I used to listen to my family tell stories about Fallujah & Sangin with wide eyes.

"The dearest lives are the deadliest to lead" - My Chemical Romance

Hail Vickery

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